

STATE OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA.CEREAL HARVEST FORECAST, 1954-55.

Reports on their harvest prospects have been received from 2,150 farmers representing 27% of the total area under crop, and the estimated acreages and yields set forth in this Bulletin are based on these reports. The following summary compares the 1954-55 estimate with the actual results for 1953-54 and the mean of the 10 years ended 1953-54.

			<u>Estimated</u> <u>1954-55.</u>	<u>Actual</u> <u>1953-54</u>	<u>Mean 10</u> <u>years to</u> <u>1953-54.</u>
Wheat-	Area	Acres	1,610,000	1,528,239	1,917,425
	Yield	Bushels	29,300,000	30,429,283	26,778,054
	Average				
	Per Acre	Bushels	18.20	19.91	13.97
Barley -	Area	Acres	980,000	1,119,663	691,122
	Yield	Bushels	17,800,000	28,397,033	14,721,893
	Average				
	Per Acre	Bushels	18.16	25.36	21.30
Oats -	Area	Acres	330,000	282,200	312,315
	Yield	Bushels	4,100,000	4,368,894	3,875,035
	Average				
	Per Acre	Bushels	12.42	15.48	12.41
Rain, April-Nov.		Inches	10.89	12.62	12.27

COMMENTS.

Seasonal Conditions - The average rainfall over the Agricultural Areas for April was nearly 3 times the mean for that month, but for May the rainfall was only one-third of the mean. The June rain was just over the mean, but July to September were very dry, the total for the three months being only 3.16 inches compared with the mean of 5.40 inches. Fortunately the falls for both October and November were practically the same as the means for those months and temperatures were near normal. The wheat crops yielded exceedingly well considering the dry spring, but barley and oats were affected by strong winds. For the third successive season, the wheat crops have yielded much better than was expected prior to harvest. Considering the rain that fell during April-November, the 1954-55 wheat yield per acre is exceptionally good.

Wheat. The estimated yield of 29,300,000 bushels is slightly less than the actual yield of 30,429,283 bushels in 1953-54 but exceeds the mean of 26,778,054 bushels for the past 10 seasons. The estimated average yield of 18.20 bushels per acre is considerably above the mean of 13.97 for the ten year period and has been exceeded only by the 21.97 bushels in 1952-53 and the 19.91 in 1953-54. The area under wheat for grain had fallen each year from 2,518,948 acres in 1946-47 to 1,528,239 acres in 1953-54 which was the lowest since 1895-96, but the estimate of 1,610,000 for the season represents an increase of just over 80,000 acres. The maximum area was 4,180,513 acres in 1930-31.

Barley. As mentioned above, the barley crops were affected by storm damage and the estimated yield is only 17,800,000 bushels compared with the 28,397,033 in 1953-54, but still is considerably higher

than the ten year mean of 14,721,893 bushels. Part of the decrease in the yield is due to the decreased acreage from the record area of 1,119,663 acres in 1953-54 to an estimated area of only 980,000 acres for the present season. The barley area, however, is still the second highest on record and the larger areas partly compensate for the lower acreages for wheat. The average yield per acre is estimated at 18.16 bushels which is below the 1953-54 yield of 25.36 and the ten year mean of 21.30 bushels.

Oats. The oats crops also were damaged by storm but as the acreage had increased from 282,200 in 1953-54 to an estimated 330,000 for 1954-55, the estimated 1954-55 yield of 4,100,000 bushels still compares favourably with the 4,368,894 for 1953-54. The average yield per acre is estimated at 12.41 bushels compared with 15.48 in 1953-54 and the ten year mean of 12.42 bushels.

Field Peas. The estimated yield of 340,000 bushels has been exceeded only by the 444,010 bushels in 1952-53 and the 423,666 bushels in 1953-54. Prior to 1951-52 the area harvested for field peas averaged only about 15,000 acres per annum, but in 1953-54 had increased to 26,093 with a slight fall to an estimated 25,000 acres for 1954-55. The estimated 1954-55 average per acre is 13.60 bushels compared with 16.24 in 1953-54.

Hay. During recent years there have been decreased acreages cut for cereal hay but there have been increased acreages of meadow hay and of improved pastures. The estimated area of wheaten, barley and oaten hay is 180,000 acres yielding 230,000 tons at an average of 1.28 tons per acre, compared with 187,791 acres 258,598 tons, average 1.38 tons in 1953-54.

General. The combined yield of wheat, barley and oats was a record in 1952-53 with 66,486,793 bushels and the **next** highest was the 63,195,210 bushels in 1953-54. The estimated total yield for this season is 51,200,000 bushels.

In 1953-54 the combined yields of barley and oats exceeded the yield of wheat for the first time. This year the estimated wheat yield again considerably exceeds the combined yield of barley and oats.

The total estimated area of wheat, barley and oats for grain, hay and green fodder is estimated at 3,385,000 acres compared with 3,448,636 acres in 1953-54. The combined area has remained very consistent during the last six seasons. The maximum area was 5,293,882 acres in 1930-31 and the lowest in recent years was 2,538,225 in 1943-44.

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GOVERNMENT STATIST.